

REMARKS:

The following remarks are responsive to the points raised in the January 13, 2005 non-final Office Action. Claims 1-13 are pending. No new matter has been introduced.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Response to Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1-13 have been rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over US Patent 6,661,544 to Okino et al. (Okino). Applicant traverses this rejection.

The Examiner urges that the image reading apparatus of Okino includes:

“a second diffusion region inserted in an optical path of light between the light source and the entrance surface, the light being emitted by the light source (Fig. 3, diffusion plate 72), photoconductive member 70 (also diffuser), col. 5, Lines 1-24).”

Contrary to the Examiner’s position, Okino discloses that the diffusion plate 72 is positioned at the light exiting side of the diffusion, or acrylic, block 70, between the photographic film carrying the images being read and the light exiting surface of the diffusion, or acrylic, block 70. The Examiner’s attention is directed to Column 5, Lines 12-14, in which Okino explicitly states that:

“The photographic film 68 is conveyed by a carrier 74 disposed at a light exiting side of the acrylic block 70 (at the side at which the light diffusion plate 72 is disposed)”

The Okino discloses, in Column 5, Lines 25 and 28 of:

“Surfaces of the acrylic block 70 other than a light entering surface into which light enters and a light exiting surface from which light exits are covered with a covering member whose reflectance is greater than or equal to 70%”

and in Column 6, Lines 20-25 of:

“Almost the whole amount of light of each of the R, G, and B colors emitted from the LED chips 64 is lead toward the light diffusion plate 72 via the protective coat 80, the adhesive 82, and the acrylic block 70, and then is incident upon the photographic film 68 in a state in which light of all of the three colors are mixed evenly within one another”

teach away from any diffusion region inserted between the light source 66 and the light entering surface of the diffusion, or acrylic, block 70 of Okino.

The Examiner stated that the diffusion plate 72 and the photoconductive member 70 disclosed by Okino correspond to the first diffusion means and the second diffusion means of Claim 1 of the present application. However, in the present invention, the first diffusion member and the second diffusion member are different from the light guide itself. By virtue of the structure recited in Claim 1, it is prevented that the R, G, and B light beams have extremely different shortest optical paths until they reach the diffusion region as described on Page 4, Lines 16-22, of the specification. The structure of Okino cannot provide such effect.

In view of the above, Applicant's respectfully submit that the image reading apparatus disclosed by Okino does not teach or suggest the illumination device as recited in Claim 1. As such, the illumination device as recited in Claim 1 is distinguished over the applied prior art reference of Okino. Dependent Claims 2-13, which depend upon Claim 1, are likewise distinguished over the prior art reference of Okino for at least the same reasons discussed above in regard to Claim 1.

Accordingly, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION


Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1-13 are in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required for filing this Amendment and Request for Reconsideration to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 1232-4719.

Respectfully submitted,
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